

PATIENT AND FAMILY EDUCATION HANDOUT

CRUTCH AMBULATION FOR STAIRS - WEIGHT BEARING AS TOLERATED (WBAT)

- Up Stairs Without a Railing: “Up With Good Leg”
 - Stand close to the step
 - Put “good” foot up on first step keeping the crutches and “bad” leg down
 - Follow through with crutches and other leg
- Down Stairs Without a Railing: “Down With the Bad Leg”
 - Lower “bad” foot and crutches to the step below
 - Keep the crutches in contact with your chest wall
 - Push down with your hands as you lower the “good” leg
- Up Stairs With a Railing: “Up With the Good Leg”
 - Hold the rail with one hand and both crutches with the opposite hand
 - Put “good” foot up on first step keeping the crutches and “bad” leg down
 - Follow through with crutches and other leg
- Down Stairs With a Railing: “Down With the Bad Leg”
 - Hold the rail while placing the crutches on the step below
 - Lower the “bad” foot next
 - Keep the crutches in contact with your chest wall
 - Push down with your hands as you lower the “good” leg

RULES:

- Never rest your body weight on the top of the crutches; excessive pressure exerted in the armpits can cause nerve damage.
- Push with your hands for leverage.
- Do not pivot when turning; take small steps or hops.
- Keep both crutches in one (1) hand when preparing to stand or sit. This allows a free hand to hold the surface you are coming from or going to.

REFERENCE:

O'Sullivan, Susan B., Schmitz, Thomas J., *Physical Rehabilitation*, F.A. Davis Company; Fifth Edition, 2007, p.556